

REMARKS

Claims 1-3 and 6-10 were examined in the Final Office Action dated October 19, 2006.

Claims 1-3 and 6-9 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as anticipated by U.S. Patent Publication No. US 2002/0075624 A1 to Wang, *et al.* ("Wang").

Claim 10 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Wang, in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,108,190 to Nagasaki ("Nagasaki").

The Applicants have amended claim 1 to more specifically recite the arrangements of the inventive processing apparatus. Specifically, in lieu of the previous recitation of a process chamber, bottom plate and a seal member "located between said process chamber and said bottom plate," claim 1 now recites "a support member made of a metal matrix composite for supporting said placement stage," and "a seal member located between the support member and a sidewall of said process chamber," wherein the support member is connected to the chamber sidewall, and serves "as a bottom plate of said process chamber."

Conforming amendments have been made to claims 2-3 and 6-8, and claims 9-10 have been canceled, without prejudice to the subject matter therein. Finally, new claim 11 has been added. Claim 11 recites an arrangement of an opening for wiring. Such an opening is shown in original Fig. 1, and thus no new matter has been added.

Consideration of the following remarks in view of the foregoing amendments is respectfully requested.

1. The Amended Claims Are Patentable Over Wang. The Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection under § 102(e) as anticipated by the Wang reference, on the ground that Wang fails to disclose all of the features of the present invention recited in amended claim 1 and its dependent claims.

The Wang reference discloses in a base 175 made of ceramics or a metal-ceramics composite material, and a support 190 made of a metal-ceramics composite material. Wang ¶ [0036]; Fig. 1 The support 190 is fixed on a lower surface 50 of a chamber 25, *i.e.*, a *bottom* wall of the chamber 25 forms the lower surface 50, and the support 190 is fixed on the bottom wall surface of the chamber 25. *Id.*

In contrast, as recited in amended claim 1, the support member itself, on which the placement stage is joined, forms a part of the wall of the process chamber, meeting and sealing against the sidewall of the chamber. For example, in the Fig. 1 embodiment the support member forms the entire bottom wall surface, with a sidewall of the process chamber having no bottom part. Thus, according to the invention recited in claim 1, a process chamber having a small volume can be achieved, and, additionally, high speed processing can be achieved since supply and discharge of process gases can be performed quickly.

The claim 1 arrangements are not disclosed or suggested by Wang, whose bottom-supported and bottom-sealing configuration (support 190 fixed to the bottom surface of the chamber 25) results in a chamber with an excessively large chamber volume, as the volume of chamber 25 is increased by a volume corresponding to the thickness of the support 190. Moreover, the Wang

configuration greatly inhibits high speed production processes, due to the interference between the bottom walls of the chamber 50 and the support 190. Accordingly, the Wang reference does not disclose or suggest the claim 1 chamber having a reduced volume by reducing a volume corresponding to the thickness of the support member as in the present invention, *i.e.*, a process apparatus having “a support member ... for supporting said placement stage,” and “a seal member located between the support member and a sidewall of said process chamber,” wherein the support member is connected to the chamber sidewall and serves “as a bottom plate of said process chamber.”

Because Wang does not disclose (or suggest) the support plate/sidewall/seal arrangement recited in amended claim 1, this claim and its dependent claims 2-3, 6-8 and 11 are patentable over this reference. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the pending § 102(e) rejection is respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing amendments and following remarks, the Applicants respectfully submit that claims 1-3, 6-8 and 11 are in condition for allowance. Early and favorable consideration, and issuance of a Notice of Allowance for these claims is respectfully requested.

If there are any questions regarding this amendment or the application in general, a telephone call to the undersigned would be appreciated since this should expedite the prosecution of the application for all concerned.

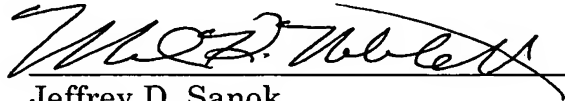
If necessary to effect a timely response, this paper should be considered as a petition for an Extension of Time sufficient to effect a timely response, and

please charge any deficiency in fees or credit any overpayments to Deposit

Account No. 05-1323 (Docket #010986.52734US).

Respectfully submitted,

January 18, 2007

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jeffrey D. Sanok", written over a horizontal line.

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